Export of salt to USA

1104. SHRIMATI S. G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has for the first time exported Salt to U.S.A.;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any other Country has shown interest in Indian salt;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps being taken to increase export of salt to other countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A consignment of 32,500 M.T. of salt has been exported to U.S.A. from Jakhau Port, Kutch District, Gujarat in December, 2002.

(c) and (d) Salt is exported to traditional markets of Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and East African countries. Recently, Japan, Vietnam, Philipines, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand have also shown interest and salt is exported to these countries.

(e) The following steps are being taken to promote export of salt:—

(1) Exports by sea/rail are exempted from the levy of cess under Salt Cess Act, 1953 and rules made thereunder.

(2) Railway is according higher priority 'B' for export of salt.

(3) Specifications for edible and industrial salt have been laid down to ensure export of only good quality salt.

(4) Star Trading Houses & Export Houses recognised by Central Government have been exempted from the purview of compulsory pre-shipment inspection of salt.

(5) Export Worthy Certificate is issued by Salt Commissioner's Organization free of charge.

(6) Establishment of salt refineries/washeries is encouraged to improve the quality of salt.

(7) To encourage export of salt, Export Award Scheme, 2002 has been introduced from the year 2002.